

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Dr. Timothy Carnahan

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Waccamaw Intermediate School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 320 Wildcat Way

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Pawleys Island State SC Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 29585-5367

County Georgetown

Telephone (843) 237-7071 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL http://www.wis.gcsd.k12.sc.us/ E-mail tcarnahan@gcsd.k12.sc.us

Twitter Handle \_\_\_\_\_ Facebook Page \_\_\_\_\_ Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

YouTube/URL \_\_\_\_\_ Blog \_\_\_\_\_ Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Randall Dozier E-mail rdozier@gcsd.k12.sc.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Georgetown County School District Tel. (843) 436-7000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Jim Dumm  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## Part I – Eligibility Certification

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 10 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 4 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 18 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- ☐ Urban or large central city
  - ☐ Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - ☐ Suburban
  - ☒ Small city or town in a rural area
  - ☐ Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	93	89	182
5	86	79	165
6	100	91	191
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	279	259	538

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 20 % Black or African American
  - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 77 % White
  - 0 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 9%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	23
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	23
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	46
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	519
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.089
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %  
7 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Spanish, Korean

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 35 %  
Total number students who qualify: 189

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %  
57 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>2</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>13</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>37</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	29
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals	5
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes    No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

The mission is to provide a nurturing and safe environment of diverse learning experiences that enable all students to become caring and productive lifelong learners

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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The mission of Waccamaw Intermediate School is to provide a nurturing and safe environment full of diverse learning experiences that enable all students to become caring and productive lifelong learners in a global and technological society. We ensure that every student leaves us with a strong foundation built on academic, artistic and athletic skills by providing a rigorous curriculum that meets individual needs through inquiry-based learning experiences. We have a collaborative community of teachers and learners who communicate freely and we illicit the support of community members as we know that a successful education is a cooperative effort among school, family, and the community.

Waccamaw Intermediate School (WIS) opened its doors in August 2008. It was built to relieve the overcrowding at our sister schools, Waccamaw Elementary and Waccamaw Middle Schools. We house grades 4, 5, and 6 in a self-contained model that allows for integration among subject areas enabling teachers to develop those important relationships with their students. WIS is located in the center of the growing coastal community of Pawleys Island, South Carolina. As a result of community growth, WIS has seen an increase in our student population since its inception. We have seen a change in free and reduced lunch since its opening due to the recent economic factors facing our country from 25% to 35%. Our Special Education department serves 13% of our population and 31% of our students are in the Gifted and Talented curriculum. Our students and their families come from widely diverse professions and cultures and remain the focus of our school.

Even though our school has many variables that impact student learning, Waccamaw Intermediate has consistently received an “Excellent” on our school report card. We have received the Palmetto Gold Award every year since we opened. Other awards that reflect our academic success is special Palmetto Gold recognition for “Closing the Gap” two years and “Overall Achievement” every year since we opened our doors. Our ESEA (Federal Accountability Rating System) grade for 2015 was Excellent. We continue to “Cultivate Excellence in Education” as reflected in our writing scores. When compared to schools like ours in the state of South Carolina, our writing scores were significantly higher.

It is critical that we learn from current and past experiences and apply this to new situations. As a school leadership team, as well as, grade level teams, we are constantly reflecting on student performance data and making changes to our instruction as needed. We analyze achievement data from MAP, PASS, ACT Aspire tests from last year, and running records to help develop our instructional focus for the beginning of each school year. We continue to analyze data from MAP, running records, formative and summative teacher assessments, and benchmark tests throughout the year in order to maintain high expectations for all of our students and provide interventions for those whose data reflect that need. We have two full-time Sp. Education teachers that work closely with the classroom teachers to support the learning of students who have been identified as needing supplementary instruction and intervention. This Response to Intervention ensures that students of all levels receive instruction geared to their individual needs. Enrichment opportunities are provided for those that are identified as gifted and talented in the areas of Math and English Language Arts through a variety of assessments such as CogAt, STAR, MAP, or PASS. Our 4th and 5th grade students receive this enriched instruction with a once a week pull-out model and our 6th grade identified students receive a challenging curriculum through a daily pull-out of ELA and Math enhanced curriculum.

We understand that academics are only one part of meeting the needs of all students. Therefore we provide many opportunities for students to participate in clubs and other non-academic activities before school, during the school day, and after school. We offer the following clubs: advanced art, music, drama, chorus, and steel drum band, and garden club; athletic clubs include First Tee Golf and the Wrestling Academy that focuses on the sport of wrestling as well as total body fitness, nutrition, and sportsmanship; science and technology clubs include our LEGO Robotics teams that work to build and program robots to accomplish missions; service clubs include K-Kids (developing caring leaders through service projects). Our 6th grade students can also participate in the yearbook club. We also offer an ABC Afterschool Program that involves over 30 students each afternoon receiving homework assistance, hands-on activities, and enhancing their skills on the computer.

Waccamaw Intermediate is devoted to ensuring that our students will learn more today than yesterday and more tomorrow than today. When students leave our doors, they will have been given the tools they need to be successful and become productive members of society.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

Today's students are preparing to enter a world in which colleges and businesses are demanding more than ever before. To ensure all students are ready for success after high school, Waccamaw Intermediate's core curriculum consists of the SC College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and Math as well as the state level Science and Social Studies standards. These standards provide consistent guidelines for what every student should know and be able to do at each grade level. The standards coupled with our district pacing guides and state and district provided support documents are the framework for learning for all of our students. We also use data from MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), Running Records, as well as district and school created Benchmark Tests to make instructional decisions that meet the needs of each individual student. Other informal measures such as teacher created tests and kid-watching/ conferencing notes are also used in creating developmentally appropriate instruction for all students.

Our mission in the ELA Curriculum is to ensure that all students are highly engaged in reading and writing in appropriately challenging texts at least 75% of the time devoted to reading and writing instruction. The ELA program is aligned to the SC College and Career Ready Standards. The core components of the curriculum include foundational skills of comprehension, accuracy, fluency, expanding vocabulary, and writing with whole group, small group, and individualized instruction. Teachers use the Reading, Writing, and Researching model in their teaching to ensure that subjects are integrated throughout the day. For students that are performing below grade level, we provide individualized instruction to meet the developmental needs of each student as well as supplementary support from a Resource teacher during the day. Students that are above grade level are provided an accelerated curriculum for ELA and Math instruction. All students receive a minimum of 90 minutes uninterrupted ELA instruction daily.

The purpose of our Mathematics Curriculum is to provide students with more than just the ability to memorize facts. They need to be able to solve real-world problems, explain their thinking to others, identify and analyze data, and use technology. Teachers collaboratively plan their lessons based on the SC College and Career Ready Standards and use the My Math district provided resource to supplement their teaching. Students receive a minimum of 75 minutes math instruction daily. In response to challenges our 6th grade gifted students had entering the Pre-algebra class in 7th grade, we began an accelerated math curriculum for gifted 6th graders that provides them with daily instruction in both 6th and 7th grade math standards during their 6th grade year with a teacher certified in gifted education. This model has reduced the class size for non-gifted students allowing for more individualized instruction and focus groups to meet all students' needs to close the achievement gap. At risk students receive extra support from our Resource teacher in addition to small focus groups within the classroom based on MAP RIT bands. The Khan Academy website is used to further individualize instruction for all student levels.

In the area of Science, we use inquiry-based learning to help students explore and discover collaboratively in scientific investigations incorporating the FOSS (Full Option Science System) and STC (Science and Technology Concepts) kits. We have a science lab that uses STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math) modules to give students experience in engineering and design. We know that students learn best with a hands-on and minds-on approach. Therefore, all students are provided opportunities to become actively engaged in the discovery process.

The Social Studies Curriculum is based on our state standards and integrated throughout the day. We use Primary Source documents, historical fiction novels, field trips, guest presenters, Immigration Fair, Greek and Roman Festival, and other experiences to help students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to become informed and productive citizens. Our school's service projects help students become good stewards of their community and recognize the need to serve others.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

It is our goal to help students become well-rounded citizens who are academically, socially, emotionally, and physically prepared for our ever changing world. Our Special Area department offers students many opportunities rich in arts and culture that we believe are vital to success. Children who are actively involved in the arts are better equipped to make lifestyle choices since they have a strong foundational knowledge of their abilities as well as a greater self-esteem due to their well-rounded education.

Our Visual Arts Department provides experiences in 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional creations, pottery, copper compositions, and stained glass mosaics. Students learn to use a variety of media, techniques, and processes to create works of visual art that help to reflect their creativity and self-expression. We have local Artists in Residence visit our school each year that share unique artistic technique with all students.

The Performing Arts provides students an opportunity to play in the band, sing, and explore different styles of music. Students have experiences in playing musical instruments and performing vocally for school performances. Enrichment opportunities are provided for students who have a desire to receive additional concentrated music instruction after school in Steel Drum Band, Art Enrichment, and Drama. We have standing room only performances such as The Lion King and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory that allow students opportunity to sing and perform in front of large audiences. Partnerships with local dance studios create avenues for students to receive additional instruction in dance.

All students are provided a minimum of 150 minutes in Physical Education and Health Nutrition on a weekly basis. Students of all ability levels participate in physical activities in a positive and safe environment. We also work closely with the County Parks and Recreation Department to provide after school athletic programs for our students. Additionally, our school implemented the Waccamaw Wrestling Academy that incorporates wellness and nutrition, fitness, and self-discipline.

Technology is integrated into lessons throughout the school day within our ELA Research block as well as benchmark testing, USA Test Prep, and Khan Academy for our Math intervention and enrichment. Advanced opportunities are provided for students through our engineer modules in science both in the classroom and in our Science Lab. Advanced computer programming and engineering design is incorporated in our gifted and talented program. Our Robotics Team provides in-depth instruction in programming, project design, core values, and teamwork. Our Character Education Program is enhanced through the First Tee Golf initiative for 4th grade where students are provided golf basics as well as character traits to utilize in everyday life. These character traits are taught during classroom guidance and implemented throughout the school on a daily basis.

## 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

We believe that teachers make the greatest impact on students' achievement and it is our responsibility to engage students in high-quality instruction every day. Our staff is of the mindset that we are all lifelong learners. Therefore, we encourage attendance at district, state, and national conferences to learn a variety of instructional methods to improve student learning. We have embraced the High Progress Literacy Classroom approach to ensure engagement of our students. This instructional model focuses on the fact that all students must be highly engaged in reading, writing, or researching in appropriately challenging texts at least 75% of the time in order to learn content. All instructional method decisions and interventions are driven by data. We use data from MAP scores, Fountas and Pinnell running records, state testing, and Student Engagement Inventories.

Classroom teachers are the first level of intervention for all students (Tier 1 and 2). Analysis and interpretation of data coupled with collaboration with team members in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) helps teachers to understand and respond to the needs of students who require additional strategies to enhance their learning. Students scoring below the 25% in MAP (Tier 3) and below grade level on running records are referred to our Student Intervention Team (SIT). The SIT team is chaired by our principal. The SIT team collects and analyzes academic and behavioral data from a variety of sources to develop a plan. The plan is monitored by the teacher and updated as the student progresses. These students receive small

group and one-on-one reading intervention daily. If student progress does not meet targeted goals, the SIT may refer the student for formal evaluation to determine eligibility for a Section 504 Plan or Special Education service. The reading programs used for interventions are Passport, Barton Reading and Spelling, Read Naturally, and Passageways. We also use technology support with the Khan Academy website to differentiate learning for math support. Opportunities for student support in math and ELA are provided before, during, and after school.

Our gifted students in grades 4 and 5 receive seven hours of gifted instruction weekly. Students in grade 6 receive 100 minutes of accelerated instruction daily in ELA and math.

These varied instructional supports provide numerous opportunities to differentiate instruction for a wide range of needs for students receiving support in our special needs classes to our gifted students.

#### 4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

South Carolina adopted the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) as the annual accountability measure for student performance on our state standards in 2009. This is a criterion-referenced assessment that assesses Social Studies and Science for grades 3-8. South Carolina College and Career READY Assessment (SC READY) was adopted in 2016 as the measure of accountability for Reading, Writing, and Math for grades 3-8. Just as one grade does not determine all that a student is or isn't, nor does one test score. We use standardized test data results along with other data when helping teachers evaluate their practice and monitor student progress.

To gain a deeper understanding of student's learning needs, teachers at WIS collect data from multiple sources including annual state assessments, benchmark tests, MAP data, classroom performance results, running records, student engagement inventories, and reading/writing anecdotal notes. Data Teams evaluate data and identify skills that need to be reinforced. The results are shared with students to help them examine their own progress and set obtainable goals. Teachers use the data to improve the quality of their instruction as well as align assessments with learning goals and state standards.

Data information is shared with parents and students through quarterly report cards, interim reports, and parent conferences. Parents have access to online parent portals for current grade information. Parent Teacher Organization and School Improvement Council meetings are held monthly where data results are reviewed with stakeholders who advocate for improved outcomes.

Based on achievement data from the most recent year of assessment, achievement gaps were shown in our African American subgroup in reading and math. In grade 4 math, there was a gap of 43.8% when comparing our African American subgroup to the rest of the students. In 5th grade math, there was a gap of 41% and in 6th grade the gap was 31.7%. There was also a gap in all grade levels in reading with our 4th grade gap 33.6%, 5th grade gap was 22.2%, and our 6th grade gap between our African American subgroup and the rest of the students was 37.2%.

WIS has taken action to address these needs. Teachers are using small group instruction in ELA and math focus groups in the classroom using MAP RIT bands. We use the High Progress Literacy Classroom framework to focus on having the students reading/writing for 75% of the time they are in the ELA classroom. Predictable structures are in place to ensure high levels of engagement. Professional development helps our teachers focus on inquiry-based teaching as opposed to being a coverage teacher. Khan Academy allows our students to work on their individual level in math. Teachers embed the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels across the curriculum to raise questioning tasks. Our district has provided us with a Reading Coach to provide support and professional development for our teachers to help address the needs of our students.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

We believe students must be highly engaged in order to reach his or her highest level of achievement and that the school climate and culture greatly impacts student achievement and behavior. We have created and sustained a learning environment that focuses on engagement, safety, physical environment, and emotional engagement for students, staff, and community. We provide support for our students, staff, parents, and community that is free from distractors such as harassment, bullying, and discrimination. Our students and staff have all participated in the Safe Schools training and follow school safety procedures. All decisions are made with student safety in mind.

We believe students must be motivated to engage in learning and that increased learning inspires motivation to learn. Therefore, we have embraced the High Progress Literacy Classroom approach to learning across all disciplines and through a self-contained instructional approach. Through our self-contained model, students and teachers become a community within a school community built on mutual respect and support. Students freely engage academically, socially, and emotionally. Teachers are able to provide high-quality instruction that is individualized and support students' individual needs. Teachers are able to provide predictable structures and customize classroom instruction for their diverse groups of students that allows students to become risk takers in order to learn. Mentally and socially, students participate in a variety of academic and social clubs such as Garden Club, K-Club, Steel Drum, Band, Chorus, Academic Club, First Lego League and Drama that ensures a sense of belonging for our students.

Our students have strong personal motivation and are challenged through high expectations, connections to real life experiences, and rigorous academic opportunities. We believe relationships matter and that it is the responsibility of every adult associated with the school to work as hard as possible to build a strong supportive relationship with the students in his or her care. Therefore, we support our students by ensuring that each student benefits from meaningful strong connections with the school, adults and peers. Our students, staff, and community all experience a school environment with high expectations, clear policies and procedures, consistent and equitable treatment, access to resources, and support services.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Student achievement is increased by engaging families and communities. It is our belief that parental involvement and engagement in the education of their children allow students to reach higher levels of achievement than those who are not engaged. We recognize that the school cannot do it alone, finding success for students is a shared responsibility. When schools, families, and communities work together, students are more successful and the community benefits.

At Waccamaw Intermediate, we have collaborated with students, staff, parents and community members to create a vision of “Cultivating Excellence in Education” that ensures student success. Through our shared leadership with our staff, Parent Teacher Organization, School Improvement Council, and Student Senate, we consistently set and reach our established goals. We reach out through surveys to identify needs and to improve goals. We effectively communicate with our stakeholders through the school's website, emails, and the parent newsletter. We acknowledge differences and view diversity as a strength for our school. As we monitor our progress and tell our story, we share the school's data to engage families and communities. We engage our families in a variety of activities and events such as our Back-to- School Bash, Book Fair, Immigration Fair, Bean Fest, Turkey-Trot, Awards Day Programs, Greek and Roman Days and Technology Fair.

Our business partners and community resources offer many levels of support. We are better able to meet school goals by utilizing key individuals at the Waccamaw Public Library, Brookgreen Gardens, the Midway Fire Department and our local Kiwanis and Optimist Clubs. Additionally, we host the ABC afterschool program that provides academic support for students and a service for working parents who need after care for their children. We also enjoy a strong partnership with "Teach My People", an afterschool program that provides academic, social, and emotional support for at-risk students and their parents.

### 3. Professional Development:

We engage in high quality professional development enhanced through teacher leadership, aligned with state standards and school district goals centered on student achievement. Our teachers, curriculum coach and administrators engage in professional learning experiences guided by an in depth understanding of academic standards and continuous review and analysis of achievement data. We use data to design and assess instructional strategies to reach targeted learning needs. We seek evidence of learning through our analysis of formal and informal assessment data collected from a variety of sources such as Measures of Academic Progress, PASS, Act Aspire, Aimsweb, benchmark test, Fountas and Pinnell running records, and Student Engagement Inventories.

To ensure effectiveness and student growth teachers participate in a High Progress Literacy Classroom model used to address student engagement across the curriculum, curriculum standards, Balanced Literacy, and Inquiry-Based Learning. Our coach receives monthly training in all areas of instruction and new initiatives. Each week our coach meets with teachers to assist in development of their expertise in planning lessons and units of study, reflect on student performance, solve problems that might hinder student success, and to provide support as they make instructional decisions. Teachers meet in professional learning teams to collaborate and work together to help each other improve teaching practices and to address student needs. They routinely discuss their teaching practices. They participate in the PLT process to ensure that the quality of teaching is increased and that all teachers receive the support needed to improve student achievement.

Beyond the walls of the school, our school district provides additional professional development support through district level coaches and consultants. District coaches provide support by designing, modeling and observing and offering feedback on lessons. Teaching and learning is enhanced through technology. Our technology coaches provide training to help use technology as an innovative way to increase motivation and student achievement.

### 4. School Leadership:

Effective school leadership is vital to our success. Our principal understands that his leadership is the one variable that can make a school successful. He sets clear expectations for students, staff, parents, and community. He believes all students can and will learn if we create the right learning environment, provide high quality instruction, and provide support for students and staff that allows them to focus on learning and achievement. It is the administration's belief that people, not programs, increase student achievement and close achievement gaps. The administration believes that relationship building amongst staff, students and parents is critical in developing trust between our school and community. This trust in our school leaders has provided the opportunity for our educational leaders to implement a curriculum and school model that we feel is best for our students. This administration follows the model that the school district has laid out the "blue prints" for success. The principal is the "architect" that designs the specific plans for the school and the teachers are the "workers" who build a strong foundation for our students. In order to have a building that will sustain the storms and be the beacon for the community it takes all parties working and communicating together for the success of the organization.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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Even though WIS has many unique factors that impact student achievement, the one practice that makes our school successful is our emphasis on High Progress Literacy Classrooms that we began five years ago. High Progress Literacy is not a program but an outcome that results from implementing instructional practices identified in the research on high progress classrooms and the research on engagement and stamina with text. The research is clear—in order to achieve high progress learners must spend most of their time engaged with reading and writing text. Therefore, we structured our ELA block so that students have large blocks of uninterrupted time to become highly engaged with reading and writing text at least 75% of the time in order to learn content. This has led teachers to become less about delivering content and more about teaching our students how to read closely, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate-- all within the content defined by the standards. In other words, we are teaching learners how to learn.

The transformation wasn't an easy process. Many of our teachers changed from being a "coverage teacher" to being more responsive to the particular needs of learners. Our focus is on small group and individualized instruction with more customized support for struggling readers. There is more explicit teaching of what proficient readers and writers do with lots of teacher modeling and guided practice with a gradual release of responsibility to help students become independent learners. One of the challenges to teaching literacy is to make the invisible process of what good readers do visible so that students can practice this. The teachers have created literate environments filled with a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts. Students build stamina to read longer texts and teachers monitor the level of engagement because we know that learners who are not cognitively engaged in what they're reading are not really reading. We teach the students self-regulation so they can monitor their own comprehension. Teachers can be found conferring with individuals and taking anecdotal notes so that they know their learners as readers, writers, mathematicians, historians, and scientists.

Our teachers have developed an extensive knowledge base about reading to meet the diverse needs of our student population. Instruction is data driven, explicit, and systematic. We are not "just let them read" classrooms. We have set our students up for success by ensuring they receive the best instructional strategies needed to become proficient readers and writers.